



“Sense of place”—the feeling we get connecting to someplace that is distinctive—is an important part of the national park experience. Kelderhouse Farm, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (Michigan).



Every place has a *genius loci*: a combination of physical attributes, cultural connotations, and, often, personal associations that make it distinctive. Zion National Park (Utah).



Sense of place doesn't have to involve dramatic, historic events; it can be found in places where ordinary Americans worked and led their lives. (Left) Earthlodge, Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site (North Dakota). (Right) Ruins of Kennecott copper mine, Wrangell–St. Elias National Park & Preserve (Alaska).



Even so, being somewhere associated with an interesting historic figure can evoke a strong sense of place. (Left) Exterior of Connemara, the main house on the farm of the poet Carl Sandburg. (Right) The poet's study. Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (North Carolina).



National Park Service rangers often perform at New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park (Louisiana). The only national park devoted to a music genre, New Orleans Jazz also captures some of the flavor of the unique city known for jazz.



Some national parks include powerful works of art that have had a transformative impact on people: the Shaw Memorial, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site (New Hampshire).



To help you understand what it means to feel a sense of place, the writer Robert Macfarlane suggests you ask yourself this question when you go somewhere for the first time: What do I know when I am in this place that I can know nowhere else? Mission Orchard, Tumacácori National Historical Park (Arizona).